

STATE OF WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

PUBLIC NOTICE OF INFORMATIONAL HEARING AND INTENT TO ISSUE A WISCONSIN POLLUTANT DISCHARGE ELIMINATION SYSTEM (WPDES) PERMIT No.WI-0035718-06-0

Permittee: Chelsea Sanitary District, N7068 2nd Street , Medford, WI, 54451-8609

Facility Where Discharge Occurs: Chelsea Sanitary District, SWQ, NWQ, Section 1, T32N-R1E, Town of Chelsea

Receiving Water And Location: The Black River within the Black and Little Black Rivers Watershed in the Black River Drainage Basin in Taylor County

**Brief Facility Description and Summary of Proposed Changes:** The Chelsea Sanitary District wastewater treatment facility serves a population of approximately 92 with no industrial contributors. The annual average design flow is 11,000 gallons per day with actual flows averaging 5,350 gallons per day over the past five years. Wastewater generated from each home enters flows into two settling tanks. The wastewater travels to a dosing tank where water is mixed with treated wastewater. It is evenly distributed over one of three filter beds constructed of layers of fine and coarse sand. Naturally occurring microorganisms living on the sand particles break down solids in the effluent. The water from the filters is sent back to the dosing tank and filtered again. After re-filtration, the effluent is disinfected using an ultraviolet system and discharged to the Black River in Taylor County via a cascade aerator. The solids from the septage tanks are pumped regularly to prevent the discharge of accumulated solids to the sand filters. These solids are hauled to another wastewater treatment plant for disposal.

It is the Department's intention to renew the permit for another term. The proposed new permit expiration date will be December 31, 2025. Appropriate discharge limitations, monitoring requirements, and reporting conditions will be included in the permit. Changes from the previous permit include: [1] Fecal coliform monitoring and limits have been replaced with *Escherichia coli* (*E. coli*) monitoring and limits and a schedule to meet the limit. [2] Using current acute and chronic ammonia toxicity criteria and limit calculating procedures ammonia limitations were calculated. Daily maximum limits expressed as a variable limit are required. There is not a reasonable potential for the Weekly or Monthly Average limits to be exceeded but based on regulatory changes to s. NR 205.065, Wis. Adm. Code requires limits in this permit to be expressed as weekly average and monthly average limits whenever practicable. In order to comply with this regulation, a weekly average limit and monthly average limit have been included. [3] Based on the "Guidance for Total Nitrogen Monitoring in WPDES Permits" annual effluent monitoring for Total Nitrogen is required for municipal and industrial facilities discharging to surface waters. [4] Based on the size and classification of the stream the Water Quality Based Effluent Limit (WQBEL) is a restrictive .225 mg/L (monthly average) and 0.075 mg/L (6-month average). An interim phosphorus limit of 6.4 mg/L (monthly average) has been given. The facility determined that an upgrade to the current facility was needed to meet permit limitations, but the additional costs of the technology needed to meet the final WQBEL was not financially feasible. An application for an individual variance was submitted (see below)

Permit Drafter's Name, Address, Phone and Email: Sheri A. Snowbank, DNR, 810 W Maple St, Spooner, WI, 54801, (715) 635-4131, Sheri.Snowbank@wisconsin.gov

Compliance Staff's Name, Address, Phone and Email: Leila Jenkins, DNR 810 W Maple Street, Spooner, WI 54801, (715) 635-4008, Leila.Jenkins@wisconsin.gov

**Proposed Phosphorus Variance:** The Department has determined that a water quality-based effluent limitation (WQBEL) for phosphorus is needed in this permit to protect water quality. As allowed under s. 283.15, Wis. Stats., Variance to Water Quality Standard the permittee has requested a variance to the phosphorus WQBEL. In support of this request, the permittee has submitted documentation intended to demonstrate eligibility for the variance based on applicable factors. The Department concurs with the demonstration; however this concurrence is subject to US EPA approval before the variance limit may be included in the final reissued permit. In an effort to achieve phosphorus effluent reductions that are practically and economically achievable within the term of the proposed permit, the Department and permittee have mutually agreed upon specific permit conditions that include a variance limitation, monitoring of phosphorus at the frequency described in the permit and submittal of reports on source reduction measures oriented toward attainment of the phosphorus water quality standard. The designated use of the receiving water will not change as a result of the variance.

**Virtual Hearing Date and Time:** September 22, 2020 10am-11am

**Hearing Location (Virtual):** In response to the COVID-19 public health emergency and the Governor's Safer at Home mandate, the Department of Natural Resources will be hosting public hearings via a remote, virtual connection made available to the public via the options below. Virtual hearings will be recorded.

**Remote Connection for public participation:**

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/94423963814>

Meeting ID: 944 2396 3814

**Zoom Conference Call Line:** 1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)

If participating via conference call, participants will be prompted to enter the Meeting ID: 944 2396 3814  
For questions on how to connect remotely please contact: Stephen Nehring, DNR, 101 S. Webster St. PO Box 7921, Madison, WI, 53707-7921, (608) 261-6406 , Stephen.Nehring@wisconsin.gov  
Hearing Officer, Name, Address, City/State/Zip, and Phone: Sheri Snowbank, DNR, 810 W. Maple, Spooner, WI 54801, (715) 635-4131, Sheri.Snowbank@wisconsin.gov

The Department of Natural Resources, pursuant to Section 283.49, Wisconsin Statutes, has scheduled for the time and place listed above, a public hearing for the purpose of giving all interested persons an opportunity to make a statement with respect to the above announced permit action for this existing discharge.

A hearing officer will conduct the hearing in an orderly and speedy way and will use procedures specified in Subchapter II of ch. NR 203, Wis. Adm. Code, necessary to insure broad public participation in the hearing.

The hearing officer will open the hearing and make a concise statement of the scope and purpose of the hearing and shall state what procedures will be used during the course of the hearing. The hearing officer shall explain the method of notification of the final decision to grant or deny the permit and the methods by which the decision may be reviewed in a public adjudicatory hearing.

The hearing officer may put limits on individual oral statements to insure an opportunity for all persons present to make statements in a reasonable period of time and to prevent undue repetition. The hearing officer may also limit the number of representatives making oral statements on behalf of any person or group.

Informational and clarifying questions and oral statements shall be directed through the hearing officer. Cross-examination shall not be allowed.

Persons wishing to comment on or object to the proposed permit action are invited to do so by attending the public hearing or by submitting any comments or objections in writing to the Department of Natural Resources, at the above named permit drafter's address. Currently, DNR staff are working remotely and have very limited access to US mail. To ensure comments are received, the Department recommends that all comments be sent via email to the permit drafter listed in this notice. All comments or suggestions received from members of the public no later than 7 days following the date of this public hearing will be used, along with other information on file and testimony presented at the hearing, in making a final determination. Where designated as a reviewable surface water discharge permit, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is allowed up to 90 days to submit comments or objections regarding this permit determination.

Information on file for this permit action, including the draft permit, fact sheet and permit application, is accessible via e-mail by contacting the above named permit drafter's e-mail address or the above named basin engineer's e-mail during normal business hours Monday through Friday (except holidays). Note that DNR staff have limited access to permit hard copy files during this time as they are working from home, but much of the permit file is available electronically by e-mail request. Permit information is also available on the internet at: <http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/wastewater/PublicNotices.html>. Pursuant to the Americans with Disabilities Act, reasonable accommodation, including the provision of informational material in an alternative format, will be made to qualified individuals upon request.

NAME OF PUBLISHING NEWSPAPER: The Star News,

ADDRESS OF PUBLISHING NEWSPAPER: PO Box 180, Medford, WI 54451-0180

Date Notice Issued: July 30, 2020